

Office of Central Inspection Sign Permitting

Sign Permit Overview

The City of Wichita has a Sign Code in Chapter 24.04 of the Code of the City of Wichita. Copies of the ordinance may be obtained in the Office of Central Inspection on the 7th floor of City Hall, 455 North Main St., by calling OCI at (316) 268-4479, or on the City of Wichita website, www.wichita.gov. Any questions regarding private property signage may also be directed to this number.

The Sign Code regulates permanent and temporary signage, including signs that are painted directly onto exterior walls and “portable signs”, on private property. Signs are regulated with respect to zoning district classification, size, height, construction, and spacing from other signs and property lines. The Sign Code also regulates time frames for temporary signage (such as banners). The Sign Code regulates both on-site, freestanding signs and building signs, as well as “off-site” billboard advertising signs. Signage is often further regulated by special sign provisions in Unified Zoning Code (UZC) protective overlays and special use approvals (such as Community Unit Plans, Planned Unit Developments, Zoning Protective Overlays, special Zoning Overlay Districts such as Old Town and in Historic Districts, and Zoning Conditional Use Approvals).

Replacement or repainting of sign panels, or “faces”, also require a sign permit, even if the sign can or structure size is not being modified.

All permanent signs are required to be installed by Sign Hangers who have been licensed by the City of Wichita Office of Central Inspection. Such Sign Hangers must be bonded and insured, and are required to annually renew their licenses.

Step 1 – Sign Permit Application

Sign permit application forms are available in the Office of Central Inspection at the permit counter or from the OCI sign section, 268-4479. A complete application consists of:

- A completed application form
- A site plan indicating the location of the proposed sign on the building wall or property, and its distance to and location with respect to other signs on the property. The size of other building signs on the same building elevation should be noted, and the size of any freestanding signs relative to an application for a new or altered freestanding sign should be noted.
- Sign drawings showing the size, dimensions, color, materials and construction details of the sign, including height above grade.

Sign permit applications may be submitted in several ways, including:

- At the permit desk in the Office of Central Inspection on the 7th floor of City Hall
- By mail
- By fax

Step 2 – Sign Permit Review

Sign permit applications are reviewed by the Office of Central Inspection Sign and Commercial Zoning Section for compliance with the Sign Code regulations and the zoning district in which the sign is located. Specific sign restrictions that apply to any sign in a special zoning overlay or conditional use approval are also checked.

Step 3 – Permit Issuance

Once a sign application is approved, the permit may be issued. The applicant will be notified of the approval by staff.

Sign Permit Fees

Sign permit fees are based on the type and size of the sign. A schedule of fees may be obtained from the Office of Central Inspection. The fee for a specific sign, given the type and size of sign, can be obtained from the Sign staff at (316) 268-4479.

Generally, fees must be paid at the time of sign permit issuance, and may be paid by cash, check or most credit cards. However, licensed sign contractors may participate in the Fax Permit Program for Sign permits, wherein OCI will review and issue a permit approval (or denial) by fax within a minimum of 24 hours of the faxed permit application receipt. Participation in the Fax Permit Program also allows contractors to pay automatically for each permit issued by credit card, or by cash or check on a weekly basis for all permits issued during the previous week.

Sign Inspection

All signs must be inspected upon completion by OCI staff to assure that the sign was installed as approved, and so the Sign Permit can be closed. Contractors or permit applicants are responsible for requesting a final sign installation inspection by calling (316) 268-4479.